CASPAR WISTAR HODGE

A MEMORIAL ADDRESS

BY

FRANCIS L. PATTON

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This Address, in Memory of

CASPAR WISTAR HODGE, D.D., LL.D.,

PROFESSOR OF EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY AND
NEW TESTAMENT LITERATURE,

Was prepared at the request of his colleagues in the Theological Seminary, and delivered in the First Presbyterian Church, Princeton, on Sunday morning, November fifteenth, 1891.

He opened to us the Scriptures.

LUKE xxiv. 32.

CASPAR WISTAR HODGE.

HE was my most intimate friend. I have come to-day to place a wreath of affection upon his grave. My text is taken from the floral tribute which you who were his pupils placed upon his bier. This is your answer to the question, What did he do? It is a sufficient answer. He wrote no books, his voice was seldom heard beyond his native town, he took no active part in public affairs, and he shrank from the public gaze; but he opened to us the Scriptures. To more than thirty classes he unfolded the truths of the New Testament. He led them reverently over the ground that had been hallowed by the Saviour's feet, and traced the history of the Apostolic Church from Peter on the day of Pentecost to John in Patmos. Year by year he sent his pupils forth into the world laden with material for use in the service of the gospel, filled with quickening thoughts, and ready to testify that the reverent spirit

"He opened to us the Scriptures." — LUKE xxiv. 32.

can handle the subtle questions of criticism without suggesting doubt or lessening zeal.

The desire to know something of the life of an eminent man.

There are many reasons that may be given for the desire to know something of the life of an eminent man. Sometimes a man is so representative of the age in which he lives, that to write his life is really to write the history of a period. Such a life was that of Dr. Charles Hodge. He was identified with all the controversies and discussions of his church through more than half a century. But this is not true of him whose memory we honor to-day. He was an interested observer of events, but he did not come into close contact with them, and only in an indirect way helped to shape them. Sometimes a man is so widely known through his works, that a pardonable curiosity prompts us to seek a personal acquaintance with him. We love to hear the author read his own poems; and when the great man dies whom we have known only in his books, we watch carefully for his biography, and whet our appetites for some delicious morsel of table-talk or private conversation. But there is no eager public waiting for information here. We are not expected to throw open the privacy of domestic life, to

gratify a curiosity that seeks this form of commentary upon the text of a *magnum opus*. Dr. Hodge did not live in the view of the world. His life was singularly uneventful; and there is something almost pathetic in its quiet, even flow. I am simply following the natural impulses of my heart in what I say this morning. We know that we have had a great man among us, — a man whose greatness is all the more our pride, because he was our own, and we did not share him with the world. Our thoughts turn to-day, not chiefly on what he did, but on what he was. It is the life I would describe. It is the man I would portray. It is the great personality that but lately moved among us and impressed itself upon us that I would call attention to; for after all, and back of everything he said, and in spite of reticence and reserve, there was about him a commanding majesty of manhood that was palpable to all.

He did not live in the view of the world.

I hardly think that we can understand Dr. Hodge unless we give attention to some of the circumstances that shaped his life. He would probably have been the same strong, silent, candid man he was, no matter what his profession had been. But some of the features of his

nature would not have been so marked perhaps, if the peculiarities of his position had not emphasized them. Had he turned his attention to physical science, as when he was private secretary to Professor Henry it seemed not unlikely that he would, there is no doubt that he would have won the same distinction in the study of nature that he afterwards attained in the study of the Bible. Or if, following his early inclinations and the decided bent of his genius, he had entered the medical profession, as I believe his distinguished uncle at one time wished him to do, he would have won eminence in that field. And, perhaps, if he had entered into a calling that in his early years would have made large drafts upon his energy and self-reliance, he would have overcome that reluctance to self-expression, which seemed so fitting at the beginning of his professorial career to the younger son of Dr. Charles Hodge, but which after settling into fixed habit he apparently had neither the inclination nor the ability to overcome, when by long years of labor he had won his right to be a leader of opinion, and the death of older men had placed him in a position of enhanced responsibility.

In any other department of learning he would have won distinction.

Dr. Hodge, I say, must be considered in the light of his environment. This seminary, now more than eighty years old, has always stood for sound doctrine. All its professors have maintained the theology of the Westminster standards, and have been reverent students of the word of God. Dr. Archibald Alexander, to whom Dr. A. A. Hodge accords the high praise of being "incomparably the greatest of this illustrious family," was the first Professor of Theology. He was a man of keen, incisive mind, a profound thinker, a discerner of character, a seer, and a saint. With him was associated the courteous, scholarly, and godly Dr. Miller. Dr. Charles Hodge was brought into the relations he afterwards sustained to this seminary through the fatherly interest taken in him by Dr. Alexander. At his suggestion he was made a Professor of Hebrew soon after his graduation. After that, as we all know, he was appointed to the chair of Exegetical Theology, and not long before Dr. Alexander's death was his colleague and afterwards his successor in the chair of Systematic Theology.

He must be considered in the light of his environment.

* * * * *

Born 1830. Dr. Caspar Wistar Hodge was born in Princeton, Feb. 21, 1830. He grew up in Princeton; and, with the exception of the short period covered by his two pastorates, he spent his life here. We can see, then, why he loved Princeton. Others love it; even those who have spent only three or four years of academic residence here speak of it in enthusiastic terms. We who have come here to live, and who expect to die here, love it with an affection that grows deeper even if it grows sadder every year. But we are only adopted children after all. We love sometimes with a divided heart. It was not so with Dr. Hodge. He loved it as one loves the home of his childhood. He loved it with an unfaltering and an unwandering affection. Its rough streets and crooked lanes and weather-beaten houses had tender associations for him. The bridge we crossed and the brook we would sometimes pensively look into in our summer rambles would often suggest an anecdote that showed how the neighborhood was haunted by the ghosts of memory.

He loved Princeton as one loves the home of his childhood.

Besides, the theology of this seminary was to him a precious heritage. He was in intel-

lectual sympathy with it to be sure; but his hereditary relations to Princeton theology gave an emotional warmth to his convictions. He believed that Princeton had performed a mission in the past, and he believed that in the maintenance of the same truth she had a mission just as great to perform to-day.

Dr. Hodge was a quiet, reticent, studious boy. He was fortunate in his natural endowments, and more than fortunate in his preceptor. We have, doubtless, improved our educational methods in recent years; we have better text-books and great preparatory schools. Dr. Hodge did not go to school. He was the companion, pupil, and friend of one of the greatest scholars and most superlatively gifted minds this country ever produced. He learned his English grammar through his Greek. He became a purist in English style by companionship with Dr. Addison Alexander. He had glimpses of the possibilities of the human mind in what he saw in this remarkable man, that left an ineffaceable impress upon his life. Do you ask me if he had early advantages? Ask the man who grew up at Chamouni if he has seen Mt. Blanc. Wistar Hodge spent his boyhood

Influence of Dr. Addison Alexander on his early life.

He spent his boyhood in the shadow of this great man.

in the shadow of this great man. The relations between the two were intimate, and are worth referring to, because they show a side of Dr. Addison Alexander's nature that is perhaps not generally known. This intimacy began a little before Dr. Wistar was twelve years old. It was not only one of companionship but of correspondence. It is interesting to see the painstaking effort in chirography, in oddities of rhyme, in extravagances of speech, in high-sounding and unmeaning nonsense, to furnish amusement to this boy whose education he has asked the privilege of conducting. Dr. Alexander wrote a series of these communications in little manuscript volumes, called the "Wistar Magazines," which are now among the most cherished possessions of Dr. Hodge's family. Dr. Alexander was a many-sided man. He was a linguist, a critic, a theologian, a preacher, and a poet. But the wit and drollery of these "Wistar Magazines" remind me of Lewis Carroll; and make me feel that the man who wrote the well-known hymn, and published the commentary on Isaiah, and lectured on the Canon of the New Testament, and preached the sermon on Lot's wife, could also have written

"Alice in Wonderland" if he had chosen. The influence of Dr. Alexander on Dr. Hodge was visible in all his after life. To him he was indebted for those scholarly ideals that made him so painstaking in his work and, I may add, so dissatisfied with it. Dr. Alexander fitted him for college; and it is not strange therefore that he was well prepared when he entered, and that he was graduated (1848) at the head of his class.

His college life.

Dr. W. C. Cattell was Dr. Hodge's most intimate friend during his college course. The two were classmates; and when in after years they were associated, the one as a professor, the other as a director in Princeton Seminary, Dr. Hodge's house was always his classmate's home when he visited Princeton. In a private letter to me, Dr. Cattell says, "He was then, as in all his after life, quiet and reserved, making but few acquaintances even among the members of his own class. But we soon became very intimate. My room in the college was like his own. We studied our lessons together, and, of course, I soon learned to appreciate his superior scholarship. He helped me out of all the hard places. Of course he

easily led his class and graduated with the first honor. There were able men in the class, but Wistar's scholarship was so high that there could scarcely be said to have been a good second to him. And then he was universally recognized as a man of elevated principles. I do not think a purer-hearted boy or man ever lived."

Dr. Hodge acted for one year as a tutor in the college while carrying on his studies in the theological seminary, and taught another year also at the Edgehill School. He remained four years in the seminary, and at the close of his period of study was licensed by the Presbytery of New Brunswick in 1853. On November 5, 1854, he was ordained to the ministry by the Presbytery of New York. His first pastoral charge was the Ainslie-Street Presbyterian Church, Williamsburg (Brooklyn, E. D.), which he served one year as a stated supply, and then two years as a settled pastor. In 1856 he was called to the pastorate of the Presbyterian Church in Oxford, Pa., remaining there until 1860, when he was called to his chair in the seminary. This seminary had then suffered a loss in the death of Dr. Addison Alexander

His pastorates at Williamsburg and Oxford, 1853–56.

akin to that which it has just sustained in the death of Dr. Hodge. Dr. Alexander was cut off in the prime of life, and in the very height of his fame as preacher, professor, and author. To many I dare say it seemed a very hazardous experiment when it was proposed to bring the young pastor from his rural parish and place him in the chair that had been vacated by Dr. Addison Alexander. Students who had been the pupils of Dr. Alexander may have felt that the sceptre of New Testament criticism had fallen into feeble hands. Men who were accustomed to the brilliant, versatile master may have felt that the pupil was separated from him *longo intervallo*. But the new professor only needed time, as the sequel proved. It was a happy day that fixed the choice of the directors upon Wistar Hodge as the fittest man to succeed Addison Alexander. Students are not the best judges, nor the most lenient critics of a professor during those trying years when he is organizing his material. They do not as a rule understand the difficulties that beset a man in a new field, and they are apt to judge him by the standards set by maturer scholars. Dr. Hodge, however, was fortunate in having young

Chosen as the successor of Dr. Addison Alexander, 1860.

men about him who knew how to be forbearing and sympathetic. Dr. William Irvin of New York was one of Dr. Hodge's first pupils, and I know that he always had a warm place in Dr. Hodge's heart. In a kind letter he says to me: "I was a member of Dr. Hodge's first senior class in the seminary. We graduated sixty-one men, the largest I believe on record. I think we all appreciated Dr. Hodge's position. We had all been students of Dr. Addison Alexander; we felt the burden that was on Dr. Hodge as his successor, and accorded him a deferential sympathy. I never heard a remark made that I can recollect that expressed the contrary. His course with us that year was inevitably an imperfect one. He took Dr. Alexander's Mark for one subject, and went through part of it with us exegetically. He has since repeatedly said to me with emphasis, 'Your class treated me very kindly.' . . . Then, as you know, he began to put his very life into the construction of that course of lectures which afterwards made so strong and brilliant an impression. I don't believe that any professor, especially with his retiring, reserved, and undemonstrative temper, ever made so strong an

Testimony of one of his first pupils.

impression upon his students. . . . His character always had a very strong attraction for me, although, as you know, he never seemed to try to attract any one."

* * * * *

An early appreciation of his fine qualities as a Professor.

I entered the seminary in 1863, and joined the middle class. Dr. Hodge was then lecturing on the life of Christ. He had by that time elaborately organized his material in written lectures, and his fine qualities as a professor were appreciated by the men of my day, although of course he had not then reached the eminence that he subsequently attained, and his department had not been accorded that unique position in the seminary which, by general consent and with an increasing momentum of sentiment as successive classes went out from his instruction, was afterwards accorded it by the students. It is one of the regrets of my own life that I did not devote as much energy as I ought to have done to the work of this department when I was a student here. I listened and was stimulated, and my reading was directed in no small degree by what I heard in Dr. Hodge's classroom. But I was reading hard in other lines;

and my interest in Dr. Hodge's subject was awakened at a later day, and when I could not have the benefit of his help. In 1876 the increasing feebleness of Dr. Charles Hodge made it necessary for the directors to seek a colleague for him. Dr. A. A. Hodge was then the most conspicuous theologian in our church, who was at the same time in full accord with the Princeton type of theology. He was accordingly called from Allegheny Seminary to be his father's colleague and successor.

Appointment of a colleague for Dr. Charles Hodge.

There had been at one time three Alexanders in the seminary,—father and two sons; there were now three Hodges. Of this second trio Dr. Charles Hodge was the greatest. I knew the sons too well to suppose that I could ever be doing what would be pleasing to them were I to make either equal to their father. I know how impatient Dr. Wistar was when in the shock of sudden loss and under the impulse of generous admiration some of Dr. Archie's friends would co-ordinate him with his father. And yet I, looking on as an impartial judge, can see, or think I see, how each of the sons was pre-eminent in his own sphere; and that without being equal to Dr. Charles Hodge

The three Hodges at Princeton.

in the totality of his career was superior to him in some very noticeable respects. For in estimating a man we must consider not simply his potentialities, but what he actually accomplishes. It is not what he could do if he would, or would have done had he lived, that is to be the basis of our judgment. Dr. Charles Hodge had come by long life, industrious habits, and uninterrupted study to have a command of the whole theological field which his sons never acquired. He was an exegete, a student of philosophy, and a man of large general acquaintance with the history of opinion; and he had organized his knowledge of all departments in his Systematic Theology. He had published books and engaged in theological controversies. He had been a leader of thought in matters of ecclesiastical administration, and had also fought his way in hot debate to the positions which he occupied in respect to the doctrines of sin and grace. Dr. A. A. Hodge was a man of genius. He had greater power of expression than his father, and I believe a more subtle and metaphysical intellect. He was a more popular preacher, and I should say that he was a better teacher

Dr. Charles Hodge.

Dr. A. A. Hodge.

of theology than his father ever was. But he did not have his father's erudition, nor his brother's nice and accurate scholarship. He was rapid in the movements of his mind; and when he once saw his way to a full acceptance of a theological position, it was more natural to him to adopt the *a priori* method of deduction in regard to subordinate ideas than to follow the slow and painstaking plan of inductive inquiry.

No difference in their theology though adopting different methods of inquiry.

There was no difference in the theology taught by these three men; but they reached their results by somewhat different methods. Dr. Charles Hodge had become a dogmatician by being first an exegete; and the inductive exegetical method was always visible, in spite of the large deductive element which is inseparable from the work of synthesis in Systematic Theology. Dr. A. A. Hodge was not an exegete, and had no taste for nice exegetical work. His theology is scriptural throughout of course; but his theological distinctions, which are numerous and made with nice discrimination, are usually inferences deductively reached and subsequently fortified by Scripture. Dr. Wistar Hodge, on the other hand, worked analytically. He had a system of theology; but

system was not the end that he was seeking. He made it his business to know the New Testament. He found his theology there, — the theology that his father and his brother were teaching; but every doctrine and every phase of doctrine so far as he maintained it had been wrested as a generalization from the New Testament by a separate induction. Dr. Wistar Hodge worked in a more specialized way than either his father or his brother. He was not so much concerned as they were with the history of doctrine, or with the relations that theology sustained to other departments of knowledge. But he was the most accurate scholar of the three; and, as compared with his father, I should say that he was less given to dogmatic and more disposed to grammatical and historical exegesis. As a student and teacher of the New Testament, when you consider the amount of work he did and the thoroughness with which he did it, I should not only say that he excelled his father, but that at the time of his death he was one of the foremost men in the English-speaking world. These three men supplemented each other, and together formed a wonderful triumvirate. But

Dr. Wistar worked in a more specialized way.

of course it was only for a short time that they actually stood together in the seminary. Dr. Charles Hodge died in 1878. It was one of the blessings of his richly-dowered life, as well as one of the blessings of the institution so richly favored in a succession of able and godly men, that when Dr. Charles Hodge rested from his labors his work could pass without interruption, and by a natural transition, into the hands of his two gifted sons, Dr. A. A. Hodge having undivided responsibility in regard to the department of Systematic Theology, and Dr. Wistar Hodge adding New Testament Exegesis to the work he had been doing heretofore in the department of New Testament Literature.

The death of Dr. Charles Hodge, 1878.

* * * * *

I came to Princeton Seminary as a professor in 1881, just after I had passed through a sore bereavement. I was received with open arms by all the members of the faculty, but I was treated with special affection by these two brothers. I shall never forget the night that they and their families stood beside me while we laid our little daughter down to rest beneath the blossoms that these kind friends had placed

upon the grave. From that time I was their friend; and as time went on and we became more intimate, I was more than their friend. I loved them; and they loved me. I saw them constantly. Usually I was in the house of one or the other every day. They talked to and about each other as only brothers do, and they both treated me as though I were a brother. I know how they estimated each other. What we admired in Dr. Archie, — his exuberance of speech, his affluence of illustration, and those wave-like sentences, with now and then one longer than the rest, that would roll high, break in feeling, and descend upon you like the in-rushing of the tide, — he did not like. He would have had him more sedate and painstaking in his preparations. But he looked up to him, trusted him, and I think never got over the sense of loss that he sustained in his death. Dr. Archie admired Dr. Wistar's scholarship, and I must say that of the two he was the more generous in praise. He had an unbounded admiration for him; only he deplored his lack of energy, and used to have a good-humored way of saying that Wistar was "so superior," meaning that he often had a manner that seemed to

Dr. A. A. Hodge and Dr. C. W. Hodge compared.

be unconcernedly confident. These two men were not alike. Their methods of teaching were as different as could be; yet to the best men in the class they were equally inspiring. One of Dr. Wistar's pupils says, "He was not the man to force knowledge upon unwilling students. He would not hammer information into reluctant minds." I think it quite likely, therefore, that Dr. Alexander Hodge succeeded in making an impression upon the larger number of men; for he not only gave men the opportunity to learn, but made it his business also to see that they did.

A privilege to have shared their friendship.

I look back upon the period of my companionship with these men as the choicest days in my life. I regard it as an unspeakable privilege to have shared their friendship, and to have come into such intimate relationship with them. I was their junior, and fell easily into the place that was becoming to my years; but I found quite as much pleasure in the companionship of conscious subordination as I have since felt in the inevitable isolation that comes with greater responsibility. When Dr. Archie died I found myself drawn more closely to Dr. Wistar. We had much in common; and we

walked together day by day in that consciousness of a community of feeling that made it a matter of slight importance whether we spoke to each other as we walked or not. I came to know him well; and yet I feel that after all I never knew him as I have learned to know him during the few days that I have spent among his papers.

It is not easy even for one who was intimate with Dr. Wistar Hodge to describe him. One needs great patience, and more discernment I fear than I possess for such a task as this. Dr. Hodge was the most objective man — perhaps that word expresses what I mean as well as any I can find — I ever knew. You may study him as you study a statue or a portrait, but he will not do anything for the purpose of helping you to understand him. If he is writing a book review, he will tell you in the most lucid way what the author says, but not what he thinks he should have said. If he loves you, you may gather that from the way he treats you, but he will not tell you so. If he expresses a judgment, it is in the same objective style, very much as a judge would decide a point of law. He will never

His marked characteristics.

say, " I am disposed to think this or that ; " " My mind works in this or that way." He will never invite you to a colloquy for the purpose of interchanging experiences ; and you have not been with him long if you have not discovered that he cares very little for your account of your subjective states. The consequence of this is, that if you wish to know Dr. Wistar, you must study him inductively and read him backwards. Dr. Archie was not that sort of man. He would always tell you how truth impressed him and what his feelings were ; and would let you see the working of the machinery of thought, if you cared to. When he wrote a book notice, you were very apt to know what he thought of the man who wrote the book and what his views were respecting the subject treated ; though Dr. Wistar's notice, I must say, would tell you more about the book itself. Now the consequence of this habit of mind in Dr. Wistar was very marked. He was so simple, transparent ; he looked so steadfastly out from his eyes, and so little backward into himself, that he never tried to please people for the sake of making them better pleased with him. He had no vanity ; he would do nothing to encour-

He never tried to please people for the sake of making them better pleased with him.

age it in others. Hence you never knew how your story was going to be received. If it was flat, he never lent it any artificial buoyancy. If your joke was not funny, he received it with an unmoved countenance. There was thus at times a certain unreciprocativeness about him that tended to arrest conversation or make it a monologue. But apart from this absence of subjectivity, which I think we all must have noticed, there were other features in his character which I think could hardly be fully understood except by those who were somewhat intimate with him. I never knew a man to be so little influenced by self-regarding motives. He was a man who simply lived for others and did his duty. There was something in his personal appearance that suggested this. We shall not soon forget him. We can see him now with his large frame and fine proportions slowly sauntering down the street, or with quickened pace and lecture-book under his arm coming from the seminary toward his study-door. He has the air of a man who is dignified without being pompous, and who, without being careless of personal appearance, is at the same time not thinking of himself. He seemed

Not self-regarding.

His personal appearance.

to be without love of fame, and indifferent to the world's honors. I believe that the desire of esteem is generally regarded by psychologists as universal. I suppose that Dr. Hodge was not an exception to the rule so far as this desire is concerned; but I cannot recall more than one or two instances in which he showed any signs of it, and then it was in such a subtle form, that it may be best described in the chemist's terminology as "a trace." I never heard him complain, or express an envious thought, or utter a word of craving for anything for himself. When he was ill, and while he feared, but before he knew the worst, he had no words for himself; and no regrets, save as he thought of the loss that his removal would be to his wife and children. And this thoughtfulness for others, descending to particulars, and assuming forms that one can scarcely think of save in tears, was the one characteristic of his illness to the very last. Dr. Hodge had a warm heart; and was always generous in his appreciation of the good in the man about whom he was talking to you. But he was positive in his likes and dislikes, and he would criticise a man's faults with unhesitating frank-

A generous appreciation of the good in others.

ness. His strong emotional nature showed itself in his preaching, for though he had great self-control, the close observer would see that he was struggling with feeling whenever an allusion to the Saviour's love passed his lips. Dr. Archie said to me once, "Wistar will never let you know that he cares for you, but if you were in trouble, or one of your children were sick, he would do more for you than anybody in Princeton."

Full of tender solicitude for others.

I like to dwell upon the tender side of Dr. Hodge's nature, because it was not the one that was generally seen. He was solicitous in regard to his friends. If you had lost tone, he detected it; if you were worried, or worn out, or disposed to over-work, then would come that troubled expression into his face, and he would look you through with that keen glance of his that might make you wince, but that certainly made you feel his deep concern for you. Of course it was in his family that this deep solicitude was mainly seen; for he was pre-eminently a domestic man. He lived for his family and with them. He was anxious, watchful, and capable of care-taking as few fathers are. He loved to dine at his own table,

and was not fond of company that he did not see in his own house. He was not a public man first, giving time and thought to work that would bring him fame or emolument, and lavishing the remnants of energy and affection upon his children. He never could have been a club-man or a man of the world; he had no pleasures but those of his own fireside; and much as he loved art and appreciated nature, neither painting nor sculpture, neither mountain nor lake, nor fiord, would have had sufficient attractions to induce him to put the ocean between himself and his family.

He never worked for fame or emolument.

Of course, we all know that Dr. Hodge was a man of great decision of character; his face would tell you that. No one ever heard him say that he was immovable; but he was. His granite nature never yielded. It would bear any pressure and make no active resistance; but it never gave way. You could not induce him to sign a paper, or attend a meeting, or buy a book, if he had said that he did not intend to do so. It did not make much difference to him that other people were doing what he was asked to do. He did not undertake to direct the consciences of other people; but

A man of great decision.

he kept full control of his own. He was not arrogant. He would not force his opinion upon you, nor insist on the last word. He was confident; but he was modest. He was not obtrusive; but he never hesitated. We always, therefore, knew where we should find Dr. Hodge. He was not aggressive, and had no zeal for controversy. He was not made for leadership, and did not love it. He was contented to live alone, to think alone, and hold his convictions in unshared solicitude and in the calm confidence that he was right.

He was not aggressive or controversial, yet held his convictions firmly.

It has been my lot to come into contact with a great many men, and to become acquainted with some at least of those who are actively and prominently employed in the work of the great church to which we belong. They are all good men; and they are all, I am sure, prevailingly influenced by good motives. But as I go over the list and think of those with whom in the last quarter of a century I have been acquainted, — of the weak men, the vain men, the conceited men, the fickle men, the tricky men, the men who are always considering policy instead of principle, and the men who use public service as a means of personal promotion;

of the men who say one thing to you and seemingly the opposite to your neighbor; of the timid men, and the men who consider consequences rather than what is right; of the good men who will betray your confidence, and the men whose words you must use with allowance; of the disingenuous men, and the men who exhibit an *arrière-pensée* manner; of the men who have an axe to grind, and the men whose kindness now is meant to be a long investment, on which with compound interest added they hope to realize after many days; — when I think of such men, and then consider the candor, the honesty, the unselfishness, the unswerving purpose, the calm judgment, and the self-contained and self-consistent life of Caspar Wistar Hodge, I think he was the grandest man I ever knew.

An honest man, with no selfish ends to gain.

Now, this positiveness of nature in Dr. Hodge was, as you would expect, allied to, and in part occasioned by, his strong conscientious devotion to principle. He was far-sighted, and looked down to the roots of all questions. When an error was presented to his notice, whether in practical living or in theological statement, he traced it back to its germinal

principle, and ran it out to its logical consequence. He was therefore always consistent; and you never found him in a place where you had to pardon his fault because it was due to the warping of judgment by feeling. This phase of his nature was conspicuous in his religious life. He was devout rather than devotional, if I make my meaning clear. Here again his extremely objective nature must be considered. He never talked about his religious states, nor indeed did he often talk about personal religion at all. There were certain phases of religion that he did not like. He hated cant; and he had no faith in the modern rose-water evangelism, that ignored the guilt of sin and the meaning of atoning blood. He believed in the ordinances of the church, in the efficacy of prayer, and the ministry of the word. But he was no friend of societies and pledges and platforms and schemes of faith-cure and devices for propagating religion by hot-bed culture. He was thoroughly churchly in his religion, and his church was the Presbyterian Church. He had no love for novelties; and he regarded all schemes that fettered the individual conscience by man-

A devout man in the best sense.

But he hated cant.

No love for modern novelties.

made regulations as new modes of returning unto the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto so many still love to be in bondage. So reticent was he, and of so undemonstrative a type was his piety, that the casual acquaintance who happened only to hear his contemptuous mutter of disapproval of some of the modern forms of religious priggery, or who heard him express himself jocosely in the blunt and somewhat secular style of speech that he sometimes employed might wonder whether he was a spiritually-minded man. No one ever doubted that who ever heard him pray. Of course a man must reveal himself in his pulpit exercises. Try as he may to hide himself, his personality must then appear; for it is what one is himself, and what one feels himself to be and to desire, that he presents to God as the confession and prayer of others. Dr. Hodge's prayers were helpful, comprehensive, and rich in experience. They went heavenward freighted with human wants. There were no flights of imagination in them. He did not soar on easy wing, as Dr. Archie did. There was no rhapsody; nor did these public utterances have the smooth liturgical flow one some-

Spiritually minded, but reticent about personal religion.

times hears. But on the other hand, they were not commonplace nor didactic, nor full of hackneyed expressions and threadbare quotations from Scripture. They were not shallow: they did not abound, as prayers so often do, in unmeaning ejaculation; they were at the utmost remove from the thin utterances of sentimentality that, I regret to say, are beginning to invade the pulpit. They were the simple, earnest outpourings of a full heart, — of a soul that had come to learn its needs, and had learned to come to God in childlike confidence for the supply of its necessities, — of a soul that carried its own burdens, and the burdens of others also, to the throne of grace. There was always such delicate appreciation of suffering, such a touch of sympathy in what he said, such considerate thought of others in his petitions, and such an unaffected gentleness of tone, that you could not help the feeling that a full-hearted man was talking with God in your behalf.

His public prayers outpourings of a full heart.

* * * * *

I have been greatly instructed by reading Dr. Hodge's sermons. He was always a favorite preacher with theological students. He

Dr. Hodge as a Preacher.

was not what is usually called a popular preacher, nor did he enjoy popular preaching. When he was in Oxford he was in the habit, I am told, of preaching extemporaneously in a little church at or near Nottingham, though he never was willing to appear without his manuscript in Oxford. I was told, only a few days ago, that one of the most intelligent men in Oxford still remembers the pleasure that he derived from those extemporaneous discourses in the little Nottingham church. I like to recall this incident because, as we all know, Dr. Hodge had great repugnance to extemporaneous preaching; never practising it himself, and never becoming reconciled to it in others.

Recollections of his preaching.

His own preaching we all remember. He had a voice of marvellous richness; but he would never use it for oratorical effect. He employed rhetorical forms of statement very sparingly. He preached apparently with the consciousness that the gospel message should make its appeal to men in majestic simplicity, and that God's word did not need the aid of human art to give it power or beauty. He made no attempt to decorate the earthen vessel that contained the heavenly treasure, — that the excellency

of the power might be of God. I remember well a sermon that he preached when I was in the seminary. There were sentences in it that fastened themselves upon my memory. The text was, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus." I have read that sermon during the past week. But I remember as well as though it were yesterday the thrill that went through me when after telling us how important it was that the name of the Messiah, though a new name, should not be unfamiliar, but, he went on to say, — "a name for homely uses, for the virgin mother to murmur over her child; a name heard in the household of Nazareth when Jesus the carpenter's son was known by the neighbors among his brethren and sisters; a name welcome in the highways of Galilee, and discussed by agitated masses in the streets of Jerusalem; a name for the home in Bethany, and which Pilate could nail to the cross." The outline of that sermon is impressed upon my memory, along with a few others, like Addison Alexander's on the Importunate Widow, Ker's on the Burial of Moses, and F. W. Robertson's on Christian Progress by Forgetfulness of the Past; so that I could never preach on that text, just as I

His sermons models of simplicity.

could never preach on the texts upon which the other sermons that I have referred to are founded, without running the risk of unconscious plagiarism. Dr. Hodge seems to have written *currente calamo*, and with few changes. He never made sentences for their artistic effect; and there is not much warmth of color in his rhetoric, except when he touches on spiritual things, and especially on the soul's relation to Christ. Of feeling that is hot and scornful, or that is buoyant and triumphant, there is little or none. But of feeling that is tender and subdued, and so controlled as just to be suggestive of pathos, there is no lack.

Without much warmth of color.

The sermons of Dr. Hodge's later years were the results of his profound exegetical studies. It would be possible to gather a pretty full systematic theology out of his sermons alone; but the theological statements are woven into the discussion, and are introduced as illustrating or as involved in the text. They are presented as an exegete, and not as a dogmatician would present them. The sermons of later years abounded in subtle references to New Testament ideas. They were really studies in Biblical theology; and while they were beyond the

They are studies in Biblical theology.

grasp and abounded in distinctions that would escape the notice of an ordinary audience, they were model discourses for the seminary pulpit. It was an intellectual treat to notice the artist-like finish that was given to these sermons, to watch the ease and naturalness with which he handled his material. He was so familiar with the thoughts, with the language, and with the development of ideas in the New Testament, that as soon as his mind began to work upon a text, the whole contextual setting, and the whole New Testament in fact, began to contribute to its elucidation. The thought was so rich, the texture so fine, the whole effect so artistic, and yet it was done with such simplicity, and the sermon was delivered in such an unemphatic manner, that I dare say the great merits of Dr. Hodge's sermons were never understood by many of those who heard him. He was not the man to indicate the strong points of his sermon as he went along, and by emphasis and accent and change of tone let his hearers know what he thought was the part of the sermon that they ought to appreciate.

But sermons nevertheless.

I have said that these sermons were studies in Biblical theology; but they were ser-

No sermon that had not a spiritual lesson.

mons too. He never preached that he did not teach a lesson or touch the conscience. What a splendid presentation of the fourfold place of the resurrection in the New Testament is the sermon on the text, "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection!" How tenderly as he closes he speaks of the difficulty of appreciating the unseen: "In the struggles, and cares, and vexations, and especially in the sins of life, how hard it is to know inwardly and experimentally the waking of the life of resurrection! And death — Ah! as we go along in life we become no better reconciled to the thought. Indeed, to the high-hearted enthusiasm of youth it may be even less terrible than to the sober understanding of experience. We become familiar, less sensitive, hardened by use. But it remains the same bitter, ruthless, unclean enemy to the end; wrenching from us our joy, and us from the light of life." That is also a fine specimen of Dr. Hodge's sermonizing which we have in the discourse on Gal. iv. 4–6, "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son," etc. It is, as all his sermons are, full of exegetical subtlety and delicate shading of thought. But I pity the man whose heart is

not touched as he leaves the church with the sound of these words, spoken in the subdued, rich tones of suppressed emotion, lingering in his ears: "And can there be a sadder or more moving thought to the conscience than to feel that one is living in his Father's house, and on his Father's bounty, and receiving daily tokens of tender and forbearing love — and yet, an unforgiven child, asking no pardon, showing no true obedience, rebellious, ungrateful, and without love. Life offers nothing better than father love and mother love; nothing stronger, nothing purer, nothing so sure. But both are combined in God, and raised to the unlimited measure of divinity. Pray thus, and after this manner pray ye: 'Our Father, who art in heaven.'"

Dr. Hodge's sermons were prepared with reference to the wants of the audience that is in the habit of meeting in the chapel of the theological seminary. They are university sermons of a high order. They are more than that. They are sermons addressed to a particular class of university men, — addressed, that is to say, to theological students. They presupposed too much acquaintance with theo-

They are University sermons.

logical opinion to be popular sermons. They were too fine in their texture to be sought after by ordinary congregations. They were full of subtle thinking, but always practical. In these sermons Dr. Hodge dealt with current errors and new movements in theology. The good sides of the movements were recognized; but the errors they involved were exposed not simply as departures from the doctrines of the church, but as involving departures of a practical kind in religious experience. This, indeed, is the characteristic of his preaching. His theology comes directly, and by deft and delicate analysis, from the New Testament; it is brought into practical relation with religious experience; and the errors of the day are presented to the view of men who are candidates for the ministry not as though the preacher were a defender of the faith, or a professed champion of orthodoxy, but a Christian friend who would warn his hearers against evil tendencies which can only cripple their work and weaken their faith. I do not know a better illustration of what I mean than the sermon on John xvi. 12–15: "I have many things to say unto you," etc. . . . It is a very masterly exhibition of the

Addressed to candidates for the ministry.

work of the Spirit in inspiring the apostles and illuminating Christians. The new doctrine of the "Christian Consciousness," and the false theories of inspiration which are now current, of course come in for notice; and the preacher closes with a reference to the modern watchword of "Back to Christ," from which I quote a few sentences, because I think that they embody what Dr. Hodge would wish to be his message to you to-day.

The watchword of a modern school.

"Your future ministry," he said, "is cast in times of great theological unrest. Foundations are broken up; truths long accepted are brought anew into question; the very principles upon which the certitude of belief is to rest are under debate. There is no use in these days for men of light and easy temper, who make up their judgment hastily on the most vital questions, or who like to be in advance of all changes, and easily renounce the most sacred heritages. Men should be sober and thoughtful. They should be students of history; they should be prayerful students of the Bible. Change is not necessarily advance. The majestic testimony of the church in all time is, that its advances in spiritual life have

always been toward and not away from the Bible, and in proportion to its reverence for and power of realizing in practical life the revealed word. The watchword of the modern school is on every hand, 'Back to Christ.' Surely we say 'Amen.' From every department of thought or life let us go back to Christ. But it is one thing to realize afresh the life and teaching of Christ in the historic spirit in relation to what is to come as the germinal planting of a future harvest of life and doctrine: it is a very different thing to go back to Christ by the rejection of all subsequent revelation which is based on his authority, and is the living development of his teaching. They tell us that it is not the Christ of the creeds. The church has lost the spirit of Christ, because she has attended to the doctrine about him; confirming in scholastic forms its conceptions, disputing about unsubstantiality and person, and nature and satisfaction to justice, and losing the living pulse of sympathy and love and practical life in her teaching. So far as the church has sacrificed life to mere theological science, it is to be repented and amended. But when the process of generalization and definition, and co-ordina-

"Back to Christ."

tion of Scripture fact is sneered at, the charge is simple puerility; and when the assertion is made that logical definition has interfered with reverential love and obedience, it is a reckless slander of the Spirit-led history of the church of Christ."

* * * * *

Dr. Hodge as a Professor.

But of course Dr. Hodge's great work was done in the lecture-room. He concentrated his powers upon the work of preparing for his classes. He did not scatter his energies. He was not engaged in various pursuits. He did not use the reputation made in other fields to make up for the lack of honest work in the field that he was responsible for. He did not allow his department to suffer by reason of a vain ambition to cover all departments and profess omniscience. His department was the New Testament, and he kept rigidly to it. His duties were those of a professor in the seminary; he had no engagements that conflicted with his appointments there. Other men might have reasons more or less satisfactory for an occasional failure to meet a class or attend a meeting of the faculty, but he was always at his post. One thing he had to

do, and he did it. He was a professor of the seminary; and no one in the list of learned men who have adorned its faculty ever served with more single-eyed devotion and more signal ability. Dr. Hodge was a man of exact scholarship and refined taste. He had a delicate sense of distinctions and a most penetrating judgment. He brought these qualities with him to the service of his chair, and made his subsequent attainments with special reference to the needs of his department. He was a man of wide general information, and was well informed in regard to secular affairs. He had a retentive memory, an unusual ability of getting quickly at the core of a pending question, and a cool, discriminating, judicial temper. Sixteen large octavo volumes of closely written manuscript tell the story of his faithful work during thirty years of professorial life. There is a course of lectures on the "New Testament Canon," one on the "Life of our Lord," one on the "History and Literature of the Apostolic Church," and courses of exegetical lectures on John's Gospel, Romans, 1 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Hebrews. It is easy to see as

Courses of lectures during thirty years.

one looks through this mass of manuscript, that the work has been done with painstaking care, and the writer is master of his material.

The courses on the "Life of Christ" and the "Apostolic Church" took the greatest hold upon the students. I am not saying too much, — and it is not said as in any way implying a relative depreciation of the other departments, — if I say that the students carried more out of Dr. Wistar's class-room into the actual work of pulpit preparation than out of any other. It was in that class-room that they came into direct contact with the words of Christ and his apostles. It was there that they were brought into closest relation with the controversies concerning the truth of Christianity. In other class-rooms, to be sure, they dealt with the discussions concerning the existence of God, or the nature of inspiration, or the truth of prophecy, or the authorship of the "Pentateuch;" but in Dr. Wistar's room they saw how men attacked the very citadel of Christianity. Under his guidance, they fought over again the battles of the higher criticism in the gospel question, the question

His influence on his students.

concerning the letters of St. Paul, and St. Paul's own relation to Christ and the apostles of the circumcision. The questions that Dr. Wistar dealt with were those that involved the very life of Christianity.

There are many ways in which a professor might deal with the subjects presented to him in this great department. He might ignore the questions of modern criticism, and say that the seminary was no place for bringing men into acquaintance with modern doubt. But Dr. Hodge was too wise a man for that. He did not teach a Sunday-school. He knew that full-grown men with cultivated intellects could not be kept from reading rationalistic books. He acted upon the manly plan of meeting false criticism by true criticism, and of showing that a true inductive method does not lead to the barren conclusions that the critics claim. Or he might shirk the difficulties presented, and make up for lack of argument by boldness of assertion. But this would imply one of two things, either that the professor is poorly equipped, or that Christianity has no case. Dr. Hodge, however, was too honest a man to adopt a method

He did not ignore critical difficulties.

like this. He knew his ground, and he had confidence in the truth of his cause. Or, again, it would have been easy for a man in Dr. Hodge's position to mark off a little principality on the map of "New Testament Literature," which he could make his own; winning fame as a specialist, while neglecting his duty as a general teacher. I wish, indeed, that he had evinced more love of fame; but, as I have said, he had no vanity, and moreover he had little faith in novelties. Or yet again, a professor in his department might easily, and perhaps without intending it, have made the academic lecture the occasion of sowing the seeds of doubt in the minds of those who were looking up to him for guidance. The worst heresy is a half-truth, because it is so hard to deal with it:—

No neglect of duty in order to devote himself to a specialty.

"A lie that is all a lie can be met and fought with outright,
But a lie that is half a truth is a harder matter to fight."

There are so many reasons that can be given for this bad influence in the class-room. Men are ambitious, and seek notoriety. They love to be thought original, and they step out of the beaten path. Men raise the cry of progress, and think what is new is an improve-

He did not sow the seeds of doubt in the minds of his pupils.

ment. Men find themselves in unstable equilibrium between the old and the new modes of thinking, and they adopt a paradoxical and inconsistent style of utterance. They try to pour the new wine into the old bottles. They teach orthodoxy with the voice, and suggest heresy with a shrug of the shoulders. But there was nothing of all this in Dr. Hodge. He was a reverent believer in the Bible as the word of God, and in the doctrines of the Bible as they are formulated in the creed of his church. He was honest, fair-minded, and firm. He saw difficulties, and when it was necessary held his judgment in suspense. He knew the resources of the enemy, and did not underrate them. But he also knew the argumentative resources of Christianity. The consequence was that his lectures strengthened faith and deepened conviction; and men who had no great critical sagacity themselves felt that they had been reinforced immensely by the fact that they had a man of Dr. Hodge's scholarship and judgment on the side of the theology of the catechism.

There was in Dr. Hodge's lectures no aim-

ing at originality and no attempt at intellectual display. But there was nothing perfunctory about them. Because they were orthodox, they were not on that account exhibitions of lifeless intellectualism. Men who have listened to both Weiss and Dr. Hodge have told me that while Weiss was more brilliant, Dr. Caspar's judgment — the students always called him Dr. Caspar, I believe — on disputed points was more trustworthy. And men who make no attempt to compare the great German and the great American professor of New Testament literature unite in bearing testimony to the religious impression that the students always carried from Dr. Hodge's lecture-room. Says one of his students (I quote from a letter kindly sent me by the Rev. Mr. Dulles): "And back of his direct class-room work there was the strong influence of Dr. Hodge's religious faith, quiet and deep, showing in his sermons in the chapel, and perhaps yet more in his singularly simple and uplifting prayers in the oratory. His pupils felt that he was a man who first of all served the Master, — the Way, the Truth, and the Life, — a man who loved the truth,

His students carried a religious impression from his lecture-room.

who tried to get at the truth, not circuitously, but directly, — a man who was thoroughly at home in his own department of theological learning, and who concentrated upon that department the force of an uncommonly strong mind and the undivided study of a consecrated life."

Recollections of another student.

I must find room to quote from still another letter. It also comes from one of Dr. Hodge's admiring pupils; I refer to the Rev. Paul Van Dyke. "My recollections are of a clear and rather low-toned voice, flowing on agreeably and easily, bringing out perfectly the meaning of each sentence, but giving no additional emphasis either by word or gesture to the striking ideas; a manner which seemed almost the result of shyness, that shrank from obtruding the strong points in his lectures. It required attention to get into the flow of his thought; but once in it the hearer was carried along as pleasantly and as smoothly as by the current of some fair, strong, and yet gentle stream. There was the charm of carefully shaded expressions, the progress of beautifully articulated thought, the indefinable grace of deep and mature scholarship. His

language was the language of the gentleman and the friend of books, his method the method of the scholar, his thought the thought of an historico-critical mind of the first order, trained by a lifetime of careful judgment. . . . I have never talked with any of Dr. Caspar's pupils capable of judgment who would accord to him as a specialist and a scholar any but the first rank. Nevertheless, the most characteristic thing in his courses was not their critical nor historical, nor scholarly ability. Remarkable as they were in these respects, they possessed a still more rare and subtle distinction. The influence which came from them to the sympathetic hearer was a religious influence."

Dr. Hodge did not write for the press. His ideals were very high, and I think that dissatisfaction even with his best works had something to do with his resisting all efforts to induce him to publish a book. He had no ambition to make a name for himself by contributions to the Reviews. He felt the great importance of controversial writing; but he had been accustomed in all his early life to see that work done by his father, and it did not

He resisted all efforts to induce him to write for the public.

suit his temperament to become a public leader of thought. He was, however, deeply interested in the theological movements of his own day, and particularly those of his own church; and indirectly was influencing the church much more than was generally supposed. He saw no reason, as the result of his profound study of the New Testament, to abandon any of the theology that he had been taught. He believed in the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, and was a Calvinist of a type perhaps a little higher than his father. He was not in sympathy with the agitation in favor of a revision of the Westminster Confession of Faith. It was not because he felt that in minor statements it was incapable of improvement, but because he knew that our terms of subscription were liberal enough to remove every burden from the conscience of any man who heartily believed in generic Calvinism. He also felt, as others did, that it would be hard to arrest a movement after it had begun; and, moreover, that while older men might be satisfied with a softening of the harder lines of Calvinism, there would be no inconsiderable number of younger men who would be

His attitude toward the Revision movement.

willing to see the Calvinistic elements eliminated. He also knew that Calvinism is attacked to-day, not so much upon the ground that we have misread Paul, as that we have allowed Paul too large a place in our theology. He knew that loose views of inspiration, the doctrine of the Christian Consciousness, and the extravagant claims advanced for the new discipline of Biblical theology, were all parts of the same movement, and that there was great danger, in attempting to revise the Confession, of precipitating a discussion of a very radical nature.

His advocacy of a chair of Biblical Theology.

Dr. Hodge was himself a student and a teacher of Biblical Theology, and as far back as 1883 he advocated its claims to a place in our theological curriculum in the introductory lecture which he delivered that year. He showed us then that, apart from false presuppositions, Biblical theology lent no support to what is called "the new theology;" and he believed, and was right in believing, that apart from the inherent attractiveness and importance of the subject itself, the best way to protect the church against the errors that are commonly sheltered under the wing of Biblical

theology would be to erect a chair for the cultivation of this discipline in our own theological seminary. Dr. Hodge knew that the attack upon Calvinism through the new theology was made by bringing Paul's teaching to the test of human feeling. He saw that the attack consisted not so much in denying that Paul said what is alleged, but in denying that his opinions are necessarily binding upon us. Minimizing the authority of Paul, however, leads to minimizing the gospel story, and ends in reducing our religion to the compass of the three synoptic Gospels, — ends in reducing Christianity to the religion of the individual conscience, — ends in naturalism. He saw this; and because he saw, or thought he saw, that the church was blind, and her leaders blind, he was depressed and saddened. I cannot think of him to-day without feeling that by his death he has been spared increasing sorrow. I may be wrong; but it seems to me that American Christianity is about to pass through a severe ordeal. It may be a ten years' conflict, it may be a thirty years' war; but it is a conflict in which all Christian churches are concerned. The war will come.

His anxiety and sorrow concerning the New Theology.

The Presbyterian Church must take part in it; and Princeton, unless her glory is departed, must lead the van in the great fight for fundamental Christianity. It is not amendment, it is not revision, it is not restatement, it is a revolution that we shall have to face. The issue will be joined by and by on the essential truth of a miraculous and God-given revelation; and then we must be ready to fight, and if need be to die, in defence of the blood-bought truths of the common salvation.

* * * * *

The third great Standard-Bearer.

Five years ago to-day we assembled here at the funeral of Dr. Archibald Alexander Hodge. His life-long friend, Dr. Paxton, paid a fitting tribute to his worth. And now we are here to do honor to the memory of our third great standard-bearer who bore this honored name. We are sad; but let us not lose heart. Elisha, whoever he may be, may well cry, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" but let us comfort ourselves with Dr. Paxton's words: "What God did for our departed brother and for the fathers who have gone before us in this seminary is but a type and promise of what he will do for us."

I have said that Dr. Hodge was greatly depressed by the condition of things in our church. I think that his depression goes back to his brother's death. He missed him sadly. Naturally he was cheerful, companionable, and when he unbent in the freedom of his home, was entertaining, and though quiet, had a vein of subtle humor that was very delightful. There was perceptibly less of this in the last year or two; though he kept his bantering manner almost to the last, sometimes apparently to divert an expression of sympathy from himself. I need not tell the story of his illness, — the reluctance with which he found himself forced to abandon the work of his class-room, and the long weeks of low fever in the early spring. We all hoped that change of air would do him good; and when we knew that he had reached the mountains, we felt that improvement would soon set in. But it did not come; and it became manifest at last that nothing could be gained by longer absence from home. For that sad journey back the kindest preparations were made. One of Dr. Hodge's warm friends and admirers provided a private car for his

His last illness and reluctance to leave his work.

accommodation. He had every comfort, and all that human skill and affectionate forethought could suggest was done. It was evident to all that he had come home to die. The end was nearer than we supposed. He grew weaker every hour; and on the afternoon of Sunday, the 27th of September, quietly as when one falls asleep, he passed away.

His death, 1891.

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